CLAIMS:

1. A pad support for a beverage maker, comprising a bottom (14;64) forming a barrier for beverage liquid flowing from a supported pad (18), a discharge opening (19) in said bottom (14;64) for discharging beverage liquid through said bottom (14;64), and a nozzle (22;72) restricting said discharge opening (19) for generating a beverage liquid jet from said nozzle (22; 72), and a plurality of pad support projections (16, 17) comprising an innermost plurality (17) of said support projections projecting from said bottom (14;64) at positions circumferentially distributed around said discharge opening (19), characterized in that, seen in top plan view towards said bottom (14;64), at least some from among said innermost plurality of support projections (17) have a cross-section that is elongate in a radial direction with respect to said discharge opening (19).

2. A pad support according to claim 1, wherein said elongate cross-sections each have a length in a radial direction with respect to said discharge opening (19) and have a largest width located radially outside the middle of said length in a radial direction with respect to said discharge opening (19).

3. A pad support according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said elongate cross-sections each have an innermost end (23) and an outermost end (24), the innermost end (23) being sharper than the outermost end (24).

4. A pad support according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein neighboring ones from among said innermost plurality of support projections (17) have straight wall portions (25, 26) facing each other, thus bounding a passage (27;77) between said neighboring projections (17) having a width which is constant or decreases in radial direction towards said discharge opening (19).

5. A pad support according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said cross-sections elongate in a radial direction with respect to said discharge opening (19) are wing or droplet-shaped.

6. A pad support according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein distal ends of said support projections define a support bed (30) for supporting said pad (18), wherein said bottom (14;64) has an outermost circumference (29), and wherein the distance between said bottom (14;64) and said support bed (30) increases in radial directions towards said discharge opening (19) at least in a ring-shaped portion (28) of said bottom (14;64) surrounding said discharge opening and radially and inwardly spaced away from said outermost circumference (29).

7. A pad support according to claim 6, wherein, in said ring-shaped portion (28) of said bottom (14;64), said bottom slopes more steeply than in bottom portions radially outside said ring-shaped bottom portion (28).

8. A pad support according to claim 6 or 7, wherein said innermost plurality of support projections (17) project from said ring-shaped bottom portion (28).

9. A pad support according to any one of the claims 6 to 8, wherein, in said ring-shaped portion (28) of said bottom (14;64) surrounding said discharge opening (19), said bottom (14;64) slopes more steeply than in bottom portions between said ring-shaped portion (28) and said discharge opening (19).

10. A pad support according to any one of the claims 6 to 8, wherein said bottom (14;64) has a flat portion (31;81) between said ring-shaped portion (28) and said discharge opening (19).

11. A pad support according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the discharge opening (19) has a sharp upstream separation edge (34) forming a transition from said bottom (14; 64) to said discharge opening (19) for causing a separation of beverage liquid from the discharge opening (19) as the beverage liquid flows into the discharge opening (19).

12. A foam unit comprising a pad support (15;65) according to any one of the preceding claims and a buffer reservoir (36) positioned downstream of the nozzle (22) for

retaining a buffer quantity of beverage liquid such that, in operation, beverage liquid is jetted from the nozzle (22) into the buffer quantity of beverage liquid.

13. A beverage maker comprising:

a water heating and feeding structure (45-47) communicating with a brewing chamber (13) for feeding hot water under pressure towards said brewing chamber (13);

a foam unit according to claim 12; and

a beverage dispensing passage communicating with said buffer reservoir (36),

wherein the pad support (15;65) bounds a bottom side of said brewing chamber (13).

14. A method of preparing a beverage with a foam layer, comprising steps of forcing water through a granulate or powder upstream of a filter wall of a pad (18) and of receiving the beverage from the pad (18) using a pad support (15;65) according to any one of the claims 1 to 11, the beverage liquid flow being such that a laminar flow pattern is obtained in an area directly upstream of said discharge opening (19).